

Minutes of...Meeting to Discuss Policy Council

Details

Date: October 22, 2008

Time: noon

Place: County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor Citrus Room, San Bernardino

Attendees

- Charles Adams, Community Action Partnership
 - Rick Arden, Juvenile - Probation Department
 - DeAnna Avey-Motikeit, Department of Children's Services
 - Cindy Faulkner, First 5 San Bernardino
 - Chris Gardner, Public Defender – Juvenile Division
 - Carole Mason, Preschool Services Department
 - Margaret Hill, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
 - Mike Markel, County Counsel
 - Michelle Scray, Juvenile – Probation Department
 - Robin Sherman-Young, Superior Court – Family Courts
 - Honorable Marsha Slough, Juvenile Court Presiding Judge
 - Sue Taylor, Children's Network
 - Greg Zerovnik, San Bernardino County Library Administration
 - Michael Schertell, Department of Behavioral Health
 - *Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, Department of Public Health*
 - Tammy Williams, Children's Network
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Welcome, Self-introductions, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Judge Slough convened the meeting at 12:10 p.m. Self-introductions were made. Amy Cousineau is out sick today and Allan Rawland is out at a conference call.

A motion was made by DeAnna Avey-Motikeit and seconded by Greg Zerovnik to approve the agenda as submitted.

Corrections requested to September meeting minutes: DeAnna Avey-Motikeit mentioned there was no RBS update. Margaret Hill wanted the minutes to reflect that her boss, Mr. Thomas will be coming to the December meeting. A motion was made to approve the amended minutes by DeAnna Avey-Motikeit and seconded by Greg Zerovnik.

Topics discussed

The table below identifies the topics discussed in the meeting and the person who led each discussion.

Topic	Discussion Leader
Welcome and Introductions	Slough

Approval of Agenda	Slough
Approval of September 2008 Minutes	Slough
Children's Network Report	<i>Taylor</i>
County Self Assessment presentation/action to approve the recommendations put forth by DCS and Probation	Avey-Motikeit
First 5 Storybook	Faulkner
Out-of-County Placements	Scray/Arden
Other Announcements	All
Public Comment	

Actions

Topic	Who is Responsible	Deadline
Judge Slough will be setting up a meeting with representatives from DBH, DCS, and Probation to discuss the countywide placement process.	Judge Slough	Report back at a future Policy Council meeting.

Key points: Children's Network Report

The following highlights were given:

- Sue Taylor reported on behalf of Amy Cousineau: Seven people will be attending the Nexus Conference at Universal City, thanks for the response.
- For the Safely Surrendered Babies committee, the team will be going to the Prevent Institute at Chapel Hill, North Carolina on November 15th and returning November 19th.

Key points:
County Self
Assessment
presentation/
action to
approve the
recommendatio
ns put forth by
DCS and
Probation.

The following highlights were given:

- DeAnna mentioned that every three years DCS (Department of Children's Services) submits the SIP (Self improvement program) on a three year basis. There is a very large collaborative group involved in this work.
- DeAnna showed a PowerPoint presentation.
- DeAnna directed everyone to the Executive Summary in their agenda packet that gave further detail. This item was also posted on Children's Network website.
- DCS has a new contract source for resource families, starting in December. They will be providing background checks, home studies, and more work towards recruitment and retention of foster families.
- DeAnna stated on Tuesday she went before the Board, to get approval to recoup 5 to 10% from a vendor for Wrap Around Services. These funds will help in training foster parents on how to handle foster children that have left the Wrap Around Services program. She projects ½ million dollars for family finding through work with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate).
- Another project her staff is working on is the ILP (Independent Living Program) City to be held in the next couple of weeks.
- DeAnna mentioned they are look at recruiting qualified foster parents they can teach.
- As far as outcomes for state and federal requirements this County is doing better then most counties.
- Some areas DeAnna feels that DCS can improve upon are; FR (Family Reunification) within twelve months, to have permanency in a child's life ..
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that doesn't take two years.

- DeAnna stated the CSA (County Self Assessment) has been completed. So the next step is to reconvene the SIP group for November 3rd. Joyce Jones from DCS will be chairing the group. The group will be looking at what is the most critical need, since the four areas can not be tackled all at once.
 - DeAnna mentioned at the Foster Care Services Steering Committee meeting on Monday, October 27th there was an in-depth discussion around the lack of ADS (Alcohol Drug Services) for youth. It was mentioned that it is inappropriate to refer substance abused youth to AA meetings that are geared to adults.
 - Judge Slough was very pleased with the CSA efforts and how all the collaborative work came together. She was most appreciative of DCS and Probation collaborating together. Judge Slough asked DeAnna to pass along to her staff, what a fine job they are doing.
 - ***A motion was made and approved to accept the DCS County Self Assessment Report and forward it to the State.***
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Key points:
First 5
Storybook

The following highlights were given:

- Cindy Faulkner distributed the First 5 San Bernardino Storybook with resources in the back. This project came about by working with Harder and Company as well as 72 partner agencies.
 - Harder and Company went out and had interviews with families. They gave the families digital cameras to take pictures and notes of the progress the children were making in their care.
 - This storybook is for the general public as well as an evaluation tool/resource book.
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**Key points:
Out-of-County
Placements**

The following highlights were given:

- Michelle Scray discussed this issue came about due to the placements from San Francisco. She was hoping Allan Rawland would be present today to clarify what needs to be done. DeAnna recommended that the RBS conversation be tabled today.
- Clarification was asked if the report back to the Board of Supervisors would be coming from Children's Network and would incorporate the RBS work.
- DeAnna stated that the group home update would come through the Children's Network report to the Board of Supervisors. She suspects the group home structure could be included.
- Michelle was concerned about the databases that reflect children's placements in San Bernardino County especially at the time of disasters. DCS has a database that they can track placements. Mike Schertell mentioned at DBH they have no way to track the children being served under *AB2726 that are placed from other counties*. Michelle stated that Probation does not have a database to track placements of children, and only know about placements from other counties if the placing county notifies them.
- Judge Slough agreed to set up a small committee from DBH, DCS, Probation and Kathy Watkins to meet and discuss the countywide placement process. She will then bring back a report to the Policy Council. She sees this more as a 602 issue. Judge Slough would like this group to also come up with some proposed language for legislative purposes.
- Rick stated that historically Probation had 400 to 500 children placed in group homes, but now that is down to 200 children placed. He sees this as the main issue for the group homes in this county accepting child from other counties.
- It was mentioned that this county does not place sex offenders with non-offenders in group homes.
- Mike Schertell mentioned that he co-chairs the RBS committee and gave the following details: This County submitted the plan on October 17th. The state liked the plan submitted by San Bernardino County. They have invited Norm Dollar to do an opening address in Sacramento on November 6th. There will be an integrated policy shift so that children do not become isolated in group homes, by an integrated continuum of care, Wraparound services, finding a permanent mentor for the child, and reducing the length in the RCL 14 group homes.
- DeAnna mentioned an issue that might come up with the vendor they are using, has only one facility with 6 beds, so there may be a need for expansion.
- The RBS pilot project will be with two six beds RCL 14 group homes (one for boys and one for girls).
- A suggestion was made to have a bi-annual report to the Board of Supervisors by Children's Network that could include the RBS pilot.

**Key points:
Other
Announcement**

The following highlights were given:

- Margaret Hill distributed a Gangs and Drugs Task Force document that had lots of data and interesting information in it.
 - Rick mentioned that Tracy Reece located a possible placement for runaway girls involved in prostitution.
 - On Monday there was a massive domestic violence sweep, as many of these homes are abusive for the children living in them.
 - Judge Slough mentioned she had a DVD on the impact of violence for those wishing to view it. She suggests showing it in the lobby at Juvenile Court and might be a good training item from the State.
 - Judge Slough said big thanks goes to Children's Fund and Bonnes Meres Auxiliary as they upgraded the children's play room at the court house.
 - DeAnna mentioned that last Friday morning DCS had family finding training by Kevin Campbell. He had an excellent presentation and was able to connect an 18 year foster child with a grandmother and sibling.
 - DeAnna also stated that DCS is working with CASA to utilize volunteers for structured family finding.
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Next Meeting

No meeting in November due to the holidays. Next meeting is: December 3rd at noon, County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor Citrus Room, San Bernardino.